

walked back to the soldiers. The moment was enough to break the tension, so the militia left. The bishop turned around to thank the young man. He wasn't there anymore. He had disappeared into the crowd.

I thought, there is a sense of wonder and mystery in your life when people find courage to do things that one would never expect, when people find the ability to stand up for something that they believe, even if it threatens their life or everything they have. A Catholic university has to prepare people for that. A Catholic university has to somehow enhance in every human being that sense of wonder, that sense of mystery, that sense that you can do what you never thought you could do. You can rise above yourself, and your spirit can be enflamed, and enhanced by the needs that you see in your brothers. A university that is truly Catholic, has to pass that lesson along. I think Georgetown does.

The third and last story is a different kind of story. It's a story of a Jesuit, an extraordinary Jesuit. In Slovakia, at the time of the communist persecution, only a certain number of priests were allowed to be ordained. To ordain outside that number, the bishop would be thrown into prison and the priest as well. There was a young Jesuit who had commissioned to be a priest called Ján Chryzostom Korec. Korec was ordained at maybe 26 years-old, and began to serve as a priest. The Jesuit provincial of Slovakia who was living in disguise and living underground as so many were, came to see him one day. He said, "Father Korec, Bishop Hnilica—who was an underground bishop—has permission to consecrate you a bishop. And we feel that you should accept." Well, this is a man now 27 years old, but unless somebody accepted this burden, the Church could disappear. So ultimately he said, "Yes, I will do whatever you think is right." So, in the kitchen of a friend the next night, he was consecrated a bishop. Then he once again disappeared and continued to work as a priest.

About six months later, the provincial came to him again and said, "Korec, we have a man now who is ready to be ordained a priest, a man of the Society. Will you ordain him?" He said, "Okay." and he ordained the young man in a park at twilight. Unfortunately, the young man was not as careful as he should have been, and the authorities found out that he was a priest. They brought him in and they began to put him under all kinds of tortures and difficulties. Finally, he said, "I was ordained a priest quietly, secretly." And they said, "Who did it?" After more torture, he said, "Korec." So they went and called Korec in, and they said, "Are you a bishop?" Without going into any kind of Jesuitical subtleties, he said, "Me, a bishop, that's the silliest thing I've ever heard!" He kept saying that and they let him go. He didn't look like a bishop. Well, six months later, the provincial came back and he said, "We have another man. Will you ordain him?" Korec ordained him in somebody's living room. And this man, too, unfortunately, after some months was caught, brought in, tortured, revealed Korec, and so then they had him. They sent him away to prison in solitary confinement. He was there 18 years. And then finally in the Prague spring, they allowed him to come out and to work. They gave him a job working in a chemical factory, unpacking chemical things and spillage: a very dangerous job. He did it quietly. Now he no longer had the right to be a priest, so they gave him these other jobs. He's an interesting man, and gradually people looked for him. Gradually, he began

quietly to be a priest again. They weren't sure of him, so the lamp in his one-room bedroom apartment was wired. They listened to all of his conversations.

He has wonderful stories to tell about playing the radio so loud that the neighbors complained, but at least he could have conversations then. Gradually, he began to do things that no one else has been able to do. When the iron curtain fell, he was acknowledged as a bishop. He went down to see the Holy Father. The Holy Father told him that he was to be given given the Diocese of Nitra, which is the diocese of St. Methodius, of the great Sts. Cyril and Methodius, one of those great wonderful sees.

About two years after that I was in Slovakia and I was talking to one of the vice-presidents of the Slovak parliament who was a Catholic. We were talking about those tough days of the communist regime. And I said, "How did you ever get your education?" He said, "I went to the university." I said, "Which one?" He said, "I went to Korec University." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Every Saturday when we had off—because they had to work on Sunday. Every Saturday which was our day off, we'd pack some salami and some beer and go up into the hills and Father Korec would come. All day long, we would sit, and he would teach us about the Church, about Catholic Social Thought, about philosophy, about theology." And this man said to me, "I know more about these things than if I had gone to the university for four years because we never missed a Saturday. Dozens of us would go. He would write on pieces of paper what we had to know, and he would make 50 copies all in his own handwriting." I've seen them.

To be adventurous. To be inventive. Not to let the world make it impossible for you to grow, and live, and enjoy. Always to listen to that other voice that says you can do it: find a way. I think that's the mark of a Jesuit tradition, and I think we find it here at Georgetown.

I've kept you too long with these stories of mine, but I feel that a story, like a picture, is worth a thousand words. These stories, as I said at the beginning, have moved me, maybe hopefully a little further in my understanding of what education is. Maybe it will give us all an understanding of what I mean when I say a great Catholic university in the Jesuit tradition has to be.

Every university should teach its students and its faculty and administration that we live in a world of brothers and sisters, not as strangers and enemies, but that we all share a common dignity, and that all lives are precious, everyone's life. Secondly, to be truly Catholic, we must be open to wonder, to mystery, the mysteries of our faith, the mysteries of love, the mysteries even of science which will always be searching for greater clarity. As Catholics, we must never be afraid of mystery, of that wonder that causes us to do things we never thought we could do. Our faith is built on mystery, and to be truly wise, and truly educated, we must be men and women who accept wonder as an essential element of our existence. And finally, in the story of Cardinal Korec (who ultimately became a cardinal), we are challenged to see what a university can also be when circumstances and the challenges of the world around us call us all to find in different ways the great things that are essential for our lives and vital for our growth and wisdom. I find these things here at Georgetown. I pray that they always will be here. I pray, too, that these elements of deep human

concern of wonder and adventure, may be even more developed, more understood and embraced, under great leadership with great men and women in a brilliant future which will always be part mystery and even always part out of the box. Thank you very much.●

TRIBUTE TO LYLE RYMER II

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today, I would like to rise and pay tribute to the life of Army Specialist Lyle Rymer II. Lyle Rymer was the type of person his family and friends knew they could always rely upon. Despite his easy-going nature and quiet demeanor, he was a go-getter who always did more than was asked or expected of him. He was a loving husband and proud father who devoted himself to his family and their well-being. He was also a brave soldier with a devotion to his country, who died a hero while protecting his fellow soldiers.

As the youngest of three children, Specialist Rymer was born and spent his early childhood in Fort Smith, AR. He was a shy kid but had a gift for making others laugh and was always quick to make friends. In many ways, he was a typical teenager, who enjoyed hanging out with his friends, with whom he shared a love for fishing and hotrods. He was a hard-working student who went to high school in Roland, OK, a small town just 5 miles west of Fort Smith. Although he studied small engines at a vocational tech school half a day during his junior and senior years, he remained focused on getting his high school diploma on time, with his friends and with his class. In 1999, he did just that.

Following high school, Specialist Rymer worked construction and later joined the Arkansas Army National Guard. His grandfather had retired from the Air Force, and he began considering enrolling in airborne school or making a career out of the Army. He was proud to serve his country but, more importantly, he wanted to make a better life for him and his family; his wife LaTisha and son Sean.

March of last year brought a welcome addition to the Rymer's: a baby daughter Jasmine. What should have been a joyous time for the family proved to be bittersweet. Just as Jasmine was born into the world, her father was on a plane heading for Kuwait and service in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Specialist Rymer was assigned to the National Guard's 239th Engineering Company under the 39th Infantry Brigade, based out of Boonesville. Although he was a world away, he was proud to serve in Iraq with the 39th, a Brigade made up of 4,200 soldiers, including over 3,000 Arkansans. He also found comfort in the regular conversations he had with his family, usually on the weekends, when he could check on their welfare and let them know about the experience he was having.

In November, Specialist Rymer was granted a 2-week leave and returned home. It gave him a chance to visit with family and friends, spend time with LaTisha and Sean, but also to see his beautiful baby daughter, Jasmine, for the very first time. He would cherish this all too short time with his loved ones and, upon his return to Iraq, made sure to tell his fellow soldiers just how proud he was of the family that was awaiting his return.

The 239th, in which Specialist Rymer served as a heavy equipment operator, would play a vital role in American efforts to bring security and stability throughout Baghdad, completing more than 1,800 missions in the area. In spite of the dangerous environment and stressful conditions he and his comrades often worked under, Specialist Rymer always found a way to brighten a mood and bring smiles to their faces. He grew to love the soldiers he served with, and they loved him in return. As often happens in times of war, many of these soldiers, serving thousands of miles from home, began to consider themselves much more than fellow soldiers; they were a family and they would do absolutely anything for each other.

Tragically, on January 28, a few short weeks before Specialist Rymer was to return home, he was killed in action. The 239th was securing an area near a Central Baghdad marketplace in preparation for the upcoming Iraqi National elections. Specialist Rymer was guarding the members of his unit as they were helping place concrete traffic barriers. He was struck and killed by a single bullet from a nearby sniper.

The loss of this special young man, the first fatality for the 239th, was felt deeply by the troops who served with him. To honor Specialist Rymer, over 150 of them attended a memorial service at their brigade's chapel on base, just north of Baghdad. At the service, they all raised their right hands in salute to their fallen comrade, whom they loved and respected, and who gave his life in the protection of theirs. The company commander, CPT Jason Meharg, echoed the unspoken sentiment of his troops, "We'll refocus and continue . . . But we won't forget."

Even more deeply, the loss of Specialist Rymer will be felt by the family and the many friends he leaves behind. On February 7 at the Fort Smith National Cemetery, over 100 people showed up to his gravesite service to pay respects and to honor this fallen hero.

To many of us, the awards Specialist Rymer earned for his service will serve as a reminder of the courageous and selfless way in which he lived his life. To LaTisha, memories of the time shared with her husband and the pride felt in the family they built together will remind her of so much more. Although Sean and Jasmine may not be

able to fully comprehend the meaning of their father's sacrifice or realize the impact he had on so many others, they will one day be old enough to understand, from the words of their mother and those who knew Lyle Rymer best, just how very much he loved them.

My thoughts and prayers are with the Rymer family and with all those whose lives were touched by this special young man. We will be forever grateful for his service and for the sacrifice he made on behalf of us all.●

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN HOPPER

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today, I rise with a heavy heart to honor the life of a courageous young man from the State of Arkansas, and to pay tribute to the sacrifice he made on behalf of our way of life. Brian Hopper lived his life with an energy, sense of adventure, and courage that we can all admire. These were the qualities he displayed throughout his childhood, playing and hunting in the woods around his home in northeast Arkansas. They were also the qualities that ultimately drew him to military service, bravely defending freedom in a land he had never known.

Lance Corporal Hopper grew up just outside of the small Arkansas town of Wynne. Like other boys his age, he enjoyed growing up in the countryside; spending his time in the woods and trails near his home. Much of this time was spent with his hunting buddy, his father Rob, who taught him how to shoot when he was six. Together, they could often be found fishing or looking for deer, squirrels, and rabbits.

At Wynne High School, Lance Corporal Hopper was a member of the drama club and the school's broadcast journalism class, where he helped with the daily news program. He graduated in the Spring of 2002, and it was clear to friends and family that his next step would be enlistment in the U.S. Marine Corps. Although he was turned down by Marine Corps recruiters in Arkansas because of recent reconstructive knee surgery, this resilient young man would not be deterred. Instead, he made the trip to neighboring Mississippi and met with a new set of recruiters. He never mentioned his knee surgery and was allowed to enlist in September of 2002. He would go on to attend the School of Infantry in January of 2003, where he trained to become a rifleman.

Lance Corporal Hopper made a brief trip home during Christmas of 2003, following the completion of boot camp. It was quickly apparent to his family that he not only matured physically, but he also spoke and acted differently. The young man they had watched grow up over the years was now truly a marine, and his father couldn't have been more proud.

As a part of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Lance Corporal Hopper was deployed to

the war-torn nation last summer and quickly earned the reputation of a tough, loyal soldier who repeatedly rose above the call of duty. During military operations in Fallujah, he earned his first Purple Heart after taking on incoming fire. The flak jacket he was wearing saved him from serious injury, and possibly death. Soon after, he earned yet another Purple Heart from much more severe wounds. After raiding an Iraqi home and shooting an armed insurgent, he was struck by an explosion from a fallen grenade that left shrapnel in his knee, leg, arm, and face. Although his wounds were severe enough to have him airlifted to Germany, he chose to stay in Iraq with his unit. His personal safety was an afterthought to the loyalty he had for his comrades and the mission before them. Although he still carried pieces of shrapnel in him, he would carry on the fight. It was a testament to the courage and the heart of this brave marine.

On January 26, he boarded a CH-53E helicopter on a routine mission to help guard the Syrian border for the Iraqi elections. Tragically, the helicopter crashed amid severe weather conditions in western Iraq. All 31 soldiers aboard were killed, and it was destined to become the deadliest day of the war thus far for American forces.

Lance Corporal Hopper's brother, Patrick, who was also serving in Iraq as a marine lance corporal, would accompany his brother's body on that final flight home from Dover Air Force Base to Memphis. Emergency vehicles would shut down every intersection between Memphis and Wynne and allow the two brothers to return home to their family.

On the day of Lance Corporal Hopper's funeral, the State flag was flown at half-mast over the State Capitol in Little Rock. Along the 12-mile procession from the memorial service to Harris Chapel Cemetery, friends, neighbors and mourners lined the streets to show their respect and to honor this fallen Arkansas hero. Many held American flags high, many saluted, and others held their right hands over their heart.

At his final resting place, Lance Corporal Hopper was buried with full military honors. It was just a short walk from the home and the woods where he had spent his childhood, and it served as a reminder of how very far he had come in his life. The courageous and honorable way in which he lived his 21 years is a testament to the kind of person he was. When we think of Brian Hopper, we will think of this legacy, and will be reminded of how we are forever grateful to this brave young man for the sacrifice he made on behalf of freedom, and on behalf of us all. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family, friends, and to all those who knew and loved him.●